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**January 24, 2000**

#### **PRESIDENT CLINTON ANNOUNCES NEW EQUAL PAY INITIATIVE AND URGES PASSAGE OF PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT January 24, 2000**

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press

Secretary \_\_\_\_\_

For Immediate Release

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#### **PRESIDENT CLINTON ANNOUNCES NEW EQUAL PAY INITIATIVE AND URGES PASSAGE OF PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT January 24, 2000**

Today, President Clinton will unveil a \$27 million Equal Pay Initiative in his FY 2001 budget and urge prompt passage of the Paycheck Fairness Act in order to combat unfair pay practices against women. The Initiative includes \$10 million for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to 1) bolster the ability of the EEOC to identify and respond to wage discrimination; 2) teach businesses how to meet legal requirements; and 3) launch an equal pay public service announcement campaign to inform employers and employees alike of their rights and responsibilities. The Initiative also dedicates \$10 million for the Labor Department to train women in non-traditional jobs, and provides \$7 million for the Labor Department to help employers improve their pay policies, provide non-traditional apprenticeships, and implement industry partnerships.

**PRESIDENT UNVEILS NEW INITIATIVE.** The President's budget includes a \$27 million initiative to help the EEOC and Labor Department fight wage discrimination. The Initiative includes \$10 million for the EEOC to:

- provide, for the first time, training and technical assistance to about 3,000 employers on how to comply with equal pay requirements under the law;

- develop public service announcements to educate employees and employers on their rights and responsibilities under equal pay laws; and
- train over 1,000 EEOC staff in identifying and responding to wage discrimination, the first such training since EEOC assumed responsibility for the Equal Pay Act in 1978.

The Initiative also provides \$17 million for DOL to:

- train women in non-traditional jobs -- for instance, in the high technology industry;
- expand access to high-quality employment-related information and career guidance through the One-Stop Career center delivery system;
- fund projects to increase women's participation in non-traditional apprenticeships;
- provide employers with the necessary assistance to assess and improve their pay policies; and continue to educate the public on the importance of equal pay; and
- strengthen industry partnerships to help women retain jobs and progress in the workforce.

**PRESIDENT ALSO CALLS FOR PASSAGE OF LONG-OVERDUE LEGISLATION.** The President again will urge Congress to pass the "The Paycheck Fairness Act" introduced by Sen. Tom Daschle (D-S.D.) and Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.), to strengthen laws prohibiting wage discrimination. The highlights of this legislation include a new data collection provision; increased penalties under the Equal Pay Act (EPA); a non-retaliation provision; and a provision for increased training, research, and a pay equity award.